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ABSTRACT

A study of the Samoan "-cia" suffix is presented. It argues that, contrary to prevailing theory, Samoan does have an active/passive contrast but that it is indicated by a difference in word order rather than by verbal morphology. It is shown, however, that "-cia" is similar to a passive suffix in that passive involves the choice of a patient as subject, while "-cia" indicates the choice of a patient as absolutive. It is also proposed that "-cia" can not always be analyzed as a transitive suffix since, besides deriving transitive verbs, it also derives intransitive verbs. A brief historical explanation of why "-cia" appears in active as well as passive clauses is offered, based on passive-ergative reanalysis. (MSE)

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Patientive Absolutive Verbal Morphology and Passive in Samoan[1]

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The role of the Samoan *-Cia* suffix, illustrated in (1), has remained a mystery for over a century. It has been analyzed as, among other things, a transitive suffix and a marker of passive voice (*-Cia* marks passive in some other Polynesian languages). In the recent literature it has been claimed that *-Cia* is not a marker of passive voice and assumed that Samoan does not have an active/passive contrast. This paper argues that Samoan does have such a contrast but that it is indicated by a difference in word order rather than by verbal morphology. It is shown, however, that *-Cia* is <u>similar</u> to a passive suffix in that it indicates that a particular nominal of a clause is a patient (in the broad sense) but there is a difference in that passive involves the choice of a patient as <u>subject</u>, while *-Cia* indicates the choice of a patient as <u>absolutive</u> (hence the title of this paper). It is also argued that *-Cia* cannot always be analyzed as a transitive suffix since besides deriving transitive verbs, it also derives <u>in</u>transitive verbs. A brief historical explanation, based on the passive-to-ergative reanalysis proposed by Chung, et al. is offered as to why *-Cia* appears in active as well as passive clauses.

(1) Na fa'a'uma-<u>tia</u> e le fili le nu'u.[2]
PAST finish-*Cia* ERG the enemy the village
'The enemy destroyed the village.'

Active and Passive in Samoan

In the prevailing view of Samoan syntax, that of Chung (1976, 1978), Samoan case marking is ergative, i.e. the subjects of intransitive clauses and the direct objects of transitive clauses are in the (unmarked) absolutive case and the subjects of transitive clauses are in the ergative case (marked *e*):

(2) 'Ua alu le tama 'i Sâmoa. (intransitive)
PERF go the boy DIR Samoa
'The boy has gone to Samoa.'

(3) Na opo e le tama le teine. (transitive)
PAST hug ERG the boy the girl
'The boy hugged the girl.'

The subject and direct object of a transitive clause are permutable:[3]

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(4) Na opo le teine e le tama.
PAST hug the girl ERG the boy
'The girl was hugged by the boy.'

Now the established view is that both (3) and (4) are active transitive and that the only syntactic difference between (3) and (4) is that of word order. Here I will propose an alternative analysis in which (3) is active transitive (with *le tama* as subject) and (4) is passive (with *le teine* as subject).[4]

In what follows, I will be working with the assumptions and definitions given in (5):

(5) a. A transitive clause codes the agent and patient of a agent-patient relationship as subject and object, respectively.
b. A passive clause codes the patient of an agent-patient relationship as subject and does not code the agent as either subject or object.
c. An agent is defined broadly enough to include not only actors but also experiencers, movers, and other active participants.
d. A patient is a participant that is either acted upon or inactive. This category is broad enough to include not only participants that undergo a change of state but also objects of perception and cognition, as well as totally inactive participants.
e. I assume that all Samoan clauses (with the possible exception of those containing weather predicates) have a subject.[5]

One question that immediately arises when trying to determine whether clauses like (3) and (4) are transitive or passive is which nominal should be considered the subject. Traditionally the tests for subject in Samoan involve Equi, Raising and Clitic Placement. All of these rules affect the ergative (i.e. the nominal in the ergative case) and not the absolutive (i.e. the nominal in the absolutive case) of clauses containing an ergative and an absolutive:

(6) a. E mana'o le tama e opo le teine. (Equi)
IMP want the boy INF hug the girl
'The boy wants to hug the girl.'

b. E mana'o le teine e opo *(ia) e le tama.
IMP want the girl INF hug her ERG the boy
'The girl wants to be hugged by the boy.'

(7) a. E mafai e le tama ona opo le teine. (Raising)
IMP can ERG the boy COMP hug the girl
'The boy can hug the girl.'

b. *E mafai (e) le teine ona opo e le tama.
IMP can ERG the girl COMP hug ERG the boy
(The girl can be hugged by the boy.)

(8) a. Na ia opo-ina le teine.[6] (Clitic Placement)
PAST he hug-*Cia* the girl
'He hugged the girl.'

b. *Na ia opo-ina e le tama.
PAST she hug-*Cia* ERG the boy
(She was hugged by the boy.)

On the basis of these facts, it has previously been assumed that the ergative (and not the absolutive) is the subject of such clauses. Notice, however, that it is impossible to tell whether these rules affect the ergative in the verb-erg-abs clause type, the ergative in the verb-abs-erg clause type, or both. In other words, is an ergative a subject in both clause types or only in one, and if only one, which one? What I will claim here is that an ergative is only a subject in a verb-erg-abs clause and not in a verb-abs-erg clause.

One reason to believe that this is true concerns Samoan word order. In virtually all clause types with a full nominal subject, the subject immediately follows the verb (except for the possible intervention of short adverbial phrases as in (9a):

(9) a. 'Ua ô mai tamaiti mai le â'oga.
PERF come hither children from the school
'The children have come from the school.'

b. 'Olo'o tâ'a'alo tamaiti i le paka.
PROG play children in the park
'The children are playing in the park.'

c. Na tautala le faiâ'oga 'i le tama.
PAST speak the teacher to the boy
'The teacher spoke to the boy.'

This suggests that the nominal immediately following the verb in verb-abs-erg clauses, i.e. the absolutive, is the subject in these clauses as well.

Another reason for believing that the ergative is a subject in a verb-erg-abs clause and not in a verb-abs-erg clause involves the Samoan version of Quantifier Float (QF). According to Chung (1976:194-8), subjects and objects can freely launch a floating quantifier, i.e. they can be bound by the postverbal quantifier '*uma* 'all', regardless of where they occur in a clause. One exception I have found to this generalization is that ergatives in verb-abs-erg clauses cannot be bound by postverbal '*uma*.[7] Compare (10a-d):

(10) a. E uli 'uma e a'u uô la'u ta'avale.[8]
IMP drive all ERG my friend my car
'My friends all drive my car.'

b. *E uli 'uma la'u ta'avale e a'u uô.
IMP drive all my car ERG my friend
(My car is driven by all my friends.)

c. Na 'ave 'uma e le tama tusi.
PAST take all ERG the boy book
'The boy took all the books.'

d. Na 'ave 'uma tusi e le tama.
PAST take all book ERG the boy
'The books were all taken by the boy.'

Since both the ergative and absolutive in a verb-erg-abs clause trigger QF, I analyze such a clause as transitive with the ergative as subject and the absolutive as object. Given the assumptions and definitons in (5b&e) and the observation that only the absolutive triggers QF in a verb-abs-erg clause, I analyze such a clause as passive with the absolutive as subject. The case marking of these clauses is governed by the verb: transitive verbs (i.e. verbs which can occur in active transitive clauses) assign ergative case to agents and absolutive case to patients (in both active and passive clauses).[9]

The *-Cia* Suffix

Notice that the analysis of verb-erg-abs clauses as transitive and verb-abs-erg clauses as passive does not involve any special morphology on the verb. In particular the presence or absence of the *-Cia* suffix ((Consonant)(i)a or *-ina*) does not indicate whether a clause is active or passive. In fact, both active and passive clauses occur with and without the suffix:[10]

(11) a. 'Ua 'a'ami e le nu'u la lâtou faife'au.
PERF fetch ERG the village the their pastor
'The village have fetched their pastor.'

b. "Ua 'âmi-a le faife'au e le nu'u.
PERF fetch-*Cia* the pastor ERG the village
'The pastor has been fetched by the village.'

c. Sâ popô le 'isumu e le pusi.
PAST pounce the rat ERG the cat
'The cat was pounced on by the rat.'

d. 'Ua pô'ia e le pusi le 'isumu.
PERF pounce-*Cia* ERG the cat the rat
'The cat has pounced on the rat.'

What I would like to claim here is that although *-Cia* is not a passive suffix, it is similar to a passive suffix in that it indicates that a particular nominal of a clause is a patient, but there is a significant difference in that passive involves the choice of a patient as subject, while *-Cia* indicates the choice

of a patient as absolutive. In what follows I will illustrate a few of the major functions of *-Cia* to show that in each case the absolutive of the clause can be construed as a patient.[11]

-Cia as a Derivational Suffix

-Cia functions lexically to derive transitive verbs from middle verbs (i.e. verbs of emotion, perception, etc. that take absolutive subjects and oblique complements). In several cases there is a difference in meaning between the plain and suffixed forms. Compare, for example, the middle verb *manatu* 'think' with the derived transitive verb *manatua* 'remember':

(12) a. Sâ manatu le tama 'i lona tinâ.
PAST think the boy about his mother
'The boy thought about his mother.'

b. Sâ manatu-a e le tama lona tinâ.
PAST think-*Cia* ERG the boy his mother
'The boy remembered his mother.'

(12a&b) illustrate that it is not a vacuous statement to say that *-Cia* indicates that an absolutive is a patient since it is not the case that all absolutives are patients. For example, in the clause containing the suffixed form, (12b), the absolutive is indeed a patient; however, in the clause containing the plain form, (12a), the absolutive is an agent.

The middle verb *manatu* 'think' in (12a) takes an agentive absolutive, but if we suffix that verb with *-Cia*, the absolutive must be a patient and not an agent.[12] Compare (12b) and (13):

(13) *Sâ manatu-a le tama 'i lona tinâ.
PAST think-*Cia* the boy about his mother
(The boy remembered his mother.)

In some cases *-Cia* also derives a transitive verb from another transitive verb. Here again there is at times a difference in meaning between the plain and suffixed forms. For example, the verb *fasia* 'beat up' is derived from the verb *fasi* 'beat':[13]

(14) a. Na fasi e le tinâ le tama.
PAST beat ERG the mother the boy
'The mother beat the boy.'

b. Na fasi-a le tama e le nu'u.
PAST beat-*Cia* the boy ERG the village
'The boy was beaten up by the village.'

The examples in (14) also serve to illustrate that although it is possible to say that if *-Cia* appears on the verb (as in (14b)), the absolutive will be a patient, the converse is not necessarily true: if the absolutive is a patient, *-Cia* will not

necessarily be suffixed to the verb.[14] (14a) illustrates this point.

-Cia does not function solely as a transitive or transitivizing suffix.[15] It also derives intransitive verbs from adjectives and in a few cases from transitive verbs. Consider, for example, *pâ'ulia* 'run aground' from *papa'u* 'shallow' and *tû'ua* 'be dismissed' from *tu'u* 'put'. Here, again, we can say that *-Cia* indicates that the absolutive is a patient:

(15) a. 'Ua pâ'u-lia le va'a.
PERF shallow-*Cia* the ship
'The ship has run aground.'

b. 'Ua tû'u-a le â'oga.
PERF put-*Cia* the school
'School is dismissed.'

The fact that such clauses do not admit an ergative subject argues that they are intransitive.[16]

(16) a. *'Ua pâ'u-lia e le tama le va'a.
PERF shallow-*Cia* ERG the boy the boat
(The boy has run the boat aground.)

b. *'Ua tû'u-a e le pule le â'oga.
PERF put-*Cia* ERG the principal the school
(The principal has dismissed school.)

-*Cia* as a Flag for Fronted Ergatives

-Cia also functions as a flag for fronted ergatives. In general, nominals that are fronted for purposes of questioning, etc. lose their characteristic case marker and in all cases except that of (unmarked) absolutives, some particle appears to the right of the verb to indicate the role of the fronted nominal. For example, when the locative of clause (17a) is fronted for questioning, the resumptive particle *ai* appears to the right of the verb:

(17) a. Sâ nofo le tama i le fale.
PAST stay the boy in the house
'The boy stayed home.'

b. 'O fea le mea sâ nofo ai le tama?
FOC where the place PAST stay RP the boy
'Where did the boy stay?'

Similarly, when an ergative is fronted for purposes of cliticization, relativization, questioning or focussing, the nominal loses its characteristic marker *e* and *-Cia* regularly appears suffixed to the verb.[17] Compare (18 & 19a-d):

(18) Na fufulu e le tama le ta'avale.
PAST wash ERG the boy the car
'The boy washed the car.'

(19) a. Na ia fufulu-ina le ta'avale. (Cliticization)
PAST he wash-*Cia* the car
'He washed the car.'

b. 'O fea le tama na fufulu-ina le ta'avale.? (Relat.)
FOC where the boy PAST wash-*Cia* the car
'Where is the boy that washed the car.'

c. 'O ai na fufulu-ina le ta'avale? (Questioning)
FOC who PAST wash-*Cia* the car
'Who washed the car.'

d. 'O le tama na fufulu-ina le ta'avale. (Focussing)
FOC the boy PAST wash-*Cia* the car
'It is the boy who washed the car.'

Although the local function of *-Cia* here is that of identifying the fronted nominal as an ergative, it is also true in these constructions that the absolutive is a patient. It is very feasible that *-Cia* here serves the dual purpose of identifying the fronted nominal as an ergative and specifying that the absolutive is a patient.

-Cia in Negative Clauses

-Cia also has a tendency to appear in negative sentences containing transitive verbs.[18] This is especially true of negative imperatives and clauses containing the emphatic negative expression *e le'i...(lava)* 'not (yet)'. Compare (20a&b) and (21a&b):

(20) a. Fufulu le ta'avale!
wash the car
'Wash the car!'

b. 'Aua le fufulu-ina le ta'avale.
don't the wash *-Cia* the car
'Don't wash the car.'

(21) a. 'O lo'o tusi la'u tusi. (Milner 1966:289)
PROG write my letter
'My letter is being written.'

b. E le'i tûsi-a lava la'u tusi. (Milner 1966:290)
IMP NEG write-*Cia* EMP my letter
'My letter has not been written yet.'

Chung (1978:92) incorporates this observation into a tentative suggestion that *-Cia* is a marker of unrealized mood.

Whether or not *-Cia* functions in this manner in these clauses, it is still true here, as elsewhere, that the absolutive is a patient when *-Cia* is suffixed to the verb.

The Occurrence of *-Cia* in Formal Speeches and Writing

As pointed out by Duranti (1981:90), *-Cia* occurs more often in formal speeches than in everyday conversation.[19] To this I would add that it also occurs more frequently in formal writing. (22), for example, was taken from a Samoan newspaper:

(22) Sâ vavalu-ina talo e Nelesone Lei.
PAST peel-*Cia* taro ERG Nelesone Lei
'The taros were peeled by Nelson Lei.'
(*Le Amerika Mail* 1975:2)

There is no obvious local syntactic or semantic motivation for *-Cia* in clauses like (22): there is no special meaning of the verb, the ergative is not fronted, nor is the clause negative. Other than its role as an indicator of level of usage, the value of *-Cia* in clauses like (22) may be nothing more than a redundant specification of the patientive role of the absolutive. I say "redundant specification" because it is clear from the fact that *vavalu* 'peel' is a transitive verb that the absolutive is a patient. The fact that *-Cia* occurs in such clauses more in formal writing and speeches I would relate to the general tendency for formal production to be more redundant than everyday conversation (compare, for example, the redundant *whom* in 'Whom did you see?').[20]

In sum, if there is anything meaningful that can be said about *-Cia* that is true for <u>all</u> the contexts in which it occurs, it is that when *-Cia* appears suffixed to a verb, the <u>absolutive</u> of the clause containing that verb is a <u>patient</u>. Thus I take the global value of *-Cia* to be the specification that the absolutive is a patient.

-Cia and the Passive-to-Ergative Reanalysis

Chung (1976, 1978) has argued that the present-day ergative case marking pattern of Samoan evolved from the case marking of passive clauses in some earlier version of Samoan or a language ancestral to it. I will assume this hypothesis here and show that under this hypothesis it is possible to explain why *-Cia* appears today in both active and passive clauses.[21]

Let us assume that at some point in the history of Samoan, *-Cia* marked passive and that there were passive clauses like (23) in which the subject was unmarked and the agent was marked *e*:

(23) verb-*Cia* patient *e* agent (passive)
subject

Active transitive clauses at the same time also had an unmarked subject and an obliquely marked object, in other words, essentially the case marking of middle clauses in Samoan today. Compare (24) with (12a):

(24)	verb	agent subject	*i*	patient object	(active)

(12) a. Sâ manatu le tama 'i lona tinâ.
PAST think the boy about his mother
'The boy thought about his mother.'

Now suppose at times the agent of passive clause (23) was allowed to precede the patientive subject possibly to make the nominals conform to the agent-patient order of active clauses or simply to line them up in the order that iconically represents the flow of activity from agent to patient. This would produce a passive clause like (25):[22]

(25)	verb-*Cia*	*e* agent	patient subject	(passive)

Now if at this point, the postverbal agent in clause (25) were reanalyzed as a subject, and assuming that the agent-final passive in (23) survived, we would have an active/passive contrast as in (26):

(26)	a.	verb-*Cia*	*e* agent subject	patient object	(active)
	b.	verb-*Cia*	patient subject	*e* agent	(passive)

Notice that the only thing which distinguishes clauses (26a&b) is word order, since *-Cia* now appears in both clauses. Given this state of affairs, *-Cia* would cease to distinguish active from passive clauses and could possibily take on new functions such as those of lexical derivation and acting as a flag for fronted ergatives. The order of nominals would then indicate whether a clause is active or passive. This, then, could explain why *-Cia* appears today in both active and passive clauses.

FOOTNOTES

1. Funds for fieldwork for this paper were provided by the Academic Senate of U. C. San Diego. My principal consultants were Falana'i Ala, Kereti Misailegalu and Willie Uili, to whom I am most grateful for their patience and insights.
2. An apostrophe indicates a glottal stop and a *g* indicates a velar nasal. A circumflex indicates a long vowel. The hyphen used

here to separate the *-Cia* suffix from its stem does not occur in normal Samoan orthography.

3. Ochs (1982:649 fn.1) observes that VSO (verb-erg-abs) and VOS (verb-abs-erg) word order occur with near equal frequency.

4. This is a somewhat revolutionary stance to take, considering that the majority of scholars who have studied Samoan in depth (e.g. Milner (1962, 1966, 1973) and Chung (1976, 1978)) have concluded that Samoan does not have a passive construction. I took the same position as Milner and Chung in Cook (1978).

5. The weather predicates I am referring to here include such verbs as *timu* 'rain' as in *'Ua timu* (PERF rain)'It is raining.

6. The role of the *-Cia* suffix in clauses with transitive verbs and clitics will be discussed below.

7. A more accurate statement of QF is that all speakers allow QF with subjects and absolutives, and some also with objects that are not absolutives (i.e. with recipients in dative-shift clauses), but the justification for that characterization is beyond the scope of this paper (see Cook (to appear)). Therefore I will continue to work with the formulation in terms of subjects and objects, which is accurate enough for present purposes.

8. The absence of a singular determiner (either *le* 'the' or *se* 'a' or one of their combined forms such as *la'u* 'my') is an indication of plurality.

9. This type of analysis in which case marking indicates semantic roles and word order is determined by grammatical relations is independently motivated in that it can clear up some apparent word order exceptions in clauses containing *galo* verbs (i.e. verbs of forgetting, understanding, etc.). See Cook (to appear) for the details of this analysis.

10. The example sentences in (11) are all from Milner (1966). My glosses at times differ from those of Milner. Milner (1962, 1966, 1973) claims that *-Cia* in Samoan indicates perfective aspect. See Chung (1978:89-91) for arguments against this proposal.

The fact that *-Cia* occurs in both active and passive clauses sheds doubt on Pratt's (1960 [1911]:25) position that *-Cia* marks passive. Pratt, however, was aware that active verbs are used passively and vice versa. Note also that Pratt's dictionary and grammar were first written more than a hundred years ago (in 1862). It very well could be that *-Cia* did mark passive at the time they were first written.

11. This makes the role of *-Cia* more like that of the goal-topic verbal affixes of the distantly related Filipino languages. These affixes indicate that the focussed nominal (i.e. the topic) is a semantic goal (a "patient" as I am using the term here).

12. One exception to this generalization concerns the verb *lagona* 'feel' derived from the middle verb *logo* 'perceive'. *Lagona* would be expected to take an ergative agent and an absolutive patient, and for many speakers it does; however, for some speakers it takes an absolutive agent and an oblique patient.

13. The verb *fasia* can also mean 'possess' in the sense of a spirit possessing a human.

14. Nor is it the case in English, for example, that if a clause contains a patient, the verb will necessarily be passive. Consider sentences like 'The door opened with this key'.

15. Churchward (1926, 1951) proposed that *-Cia* specifically marks a verb as transitive and that a verb so-marked could be used in both an active and passive "sense".
16. (16a&b) are fine if the verb is prefixed with the causative morpheme *fa'a-*:

(i) 'Ua fa'a-pâ'u-lia e le tama le va'a.
PERF CAUS-shallow-*Cia* ERG the boy the boat
'The boy has run the boat aground.'

(ii) 'Ua fa'a-tû'u-a e le pule le â'oga.
PERF CAUS-put-*Cia* ERG the principal the school
'The principal has dismissed the school.'

17. I do not find the fact that *-a/-ina* is a suffix and *ai* is a postverbal particle problematic for this analysis. This difference is only a matter of a spelling convention that is not adhered to religiously. *-ina* is often written (in informal letters, etc.) as a free-standing postverbal particle, although this practice is discouraged by the "guardians of the language". See also footnote 2.
18. In this context, and in that of fronted ergative nominals, *-Cia* usually takes the shape of *-a* or *-ina*. Stems ending in *i* generally take *-a* and other stems take *-ina*.
19. More specifically, Duranti (1981:88) observes that *-Cia* appears in a wider range of forms (e.g. *-mia -tia,* etc., in addition to *-a* and *-ina*) and a wider range of contexts (more than those of fronted ergatives and negative clauses) during a *fono* (a chiefly meeting).
20. Compare, also, the fact that direct objects in Japanese are more likely to be marked with the accusative case marker *o* in formal production than in everyday conversation:

(i) Taroo ga hon (o) yon-da.
Taro NOM book ACC read-PAST
'Taro read a/the book.'

The reason formal production has more redundancy built into it, I believe, is that in writing and formal speech giving, the listener/hearer is not able to interrupt the flow of production to clarify otherwise unclear points. The speaker/hearer, in compensation, builds in more redundancies in an attempt to avoid being misunderstood. Also, such redundancies as the one involving *whom* are relics of an older stage of the language, and older language is regarded as more formal possibly because we experience it in formal contexts (e.g. the reading of the King James version of the Bible.) The same observation holds true concerning *-Cia* (see below).
21. The passive-to ergative hypothesis was originally proposed by Hale (1968) and Hohepa (1969) to account for the fact that some Polynesian languages are accusative and others, ergative. See Clark (1976) for a counter-proposal that Proto-Polynesian was ergative and that passive in Maori, etc. is an innovation. My

proposal here differs from Chung's in that it has more to say about word order.

22. This clause type is actually common in Maori today. Maori is a Polynesian language in which *-Cia* marks passive. According to the passive-to-ergative hypothesis, Maori maintained the passive of Proto-Polynesian.

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